

REMARKS

The Examiner has finally rejected claims 4-10 under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being obvious over U.S. Patent 6,397,388 to Allen in view of U.S. Patent 6,314,398 to Junqua et al.

Applicants submit that Allen is an improper reference in that the filing date thereof, to wit, November 6, 2000, falls after the priority date, July 28, 2000, of the subject application. Even if one were to accept the filing dates of the provisional applications referred to in Allen, the earliest of these dates, September 29, 2000, again falls after Applicants' priority date.

Applicants contend that they are entitled to the priority date of July 28, 2000, in that a certified copy of the priority document, EP00202684.7, was filed with the subject application, and since the priority document is in English, no translation is required.

In view of the above, the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection must fall.

Applicants believe that this application, containing claims 4-10, is now in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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